



Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada

Citizenship and
Immigration Canada



FOCUS

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For a fair and welcoming French-language community in Ontario

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www.cic.gc.ca

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La Passerelle I.D.É. is a non-profit
organization created in response to the
integration and economic development
needs of young Francophones from the
various cultural communities of Greater
Toronto. Founded in 1993, La Passerelle
is recognized within the French-speaking
community for its leadership on issues and
matters affecting its clientele.
www.passerelleide.com

To consult calls for proposals issued by
Citizenship and Immigration Canada,
Settlement Directorate, Ontario Region,
visit www.etalblissement.org.

About ...

CIC Programming for 2009-10

By: Darlyn Mentor
Director, Settlement Programs

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) programming for 2009-10 is in step with the CIC Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, as well as with the directions mapped out by the Implementation Committee and in the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality. Our programming is also based on the strategic vision and recommendations of the Subcommittee for Francophone Minority Immigration, Ontario Region.

The priorities for 2009-10 are in line with the Strategic Plan which seeks to increase the number of immigrants in Francophone minority communities, to strengthen host and settlement infrastructures, as well as to ensure the economic and social integration of French-speaking immigrants. Several initiatives reflect these priorities, including the recruitment of Francophone immigrants through the Destination Canada event held in Paris and Brussels in November 2009, the creation of one-stop shops, the implementation of projects focused on economic and social partnerships, and the development of strategic initiatives.

The Subcommittee continued to work diligently throughout 2009-10 in an effort to implement several priorities related to the integration of Francophone immigrants. Those priorities were submitted to CIC in the form of the following recommendations:

- ▶ targeted promotion and recruitment in areas with the greatest potential of French-speaking immigrants
- ▶ accelerated social and economic integration
- ▶ a welcoming Francophone community
- ▶ integrated services
- ▶ a welcoming, inclusive and harmonious community

The 2009-10 CIC program responded to the Subcommittee's recommendations with several initiatives. These include recruitment through Destination Canada, the implementation of several projects focused on economic and social integration, awareness-raising efforts via Ontario's three Networks in Francophone communities, and local immigration partnerships (LIPs) working to create integrated services.

Support for French-speaking Immigrants Through Language Training

The courses of English in the workplace offered by College Boreal in various cities in southwestern Ontario are designed for professionals educated abroad who need to polish their intercultural communications skills in the workplace.

In Ottawa, the French Language Public School Board of Eastern Ontario known as CEPEO offers several levels of French Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), including advanced training as part of the Enhanced Language Training program (ELT).

In 2010-11, online French LINC courses for levels 3 and 4 will be available to French-speaking immigrants in northern and central southwestern Ontario. An online platform for level 5 to 7 LINC French courses is currently under development.

Ottawa's La Cité collégiale has developed the *Arrimage Emploi* project. It helps professionals educated abroad to find a job that matches their level of education, experience and skills. Through a series of workshops, participants are taught about Canadian corporate culture, employers' requirements and expectations, and what steps they need to take to find gainful employment in their area of expertise.

Professional development for French-language teachers is also a CIC priority. Two projects focused on professional enrichment are currently under development at L'École de l'Estrie and La Cité collégiale.

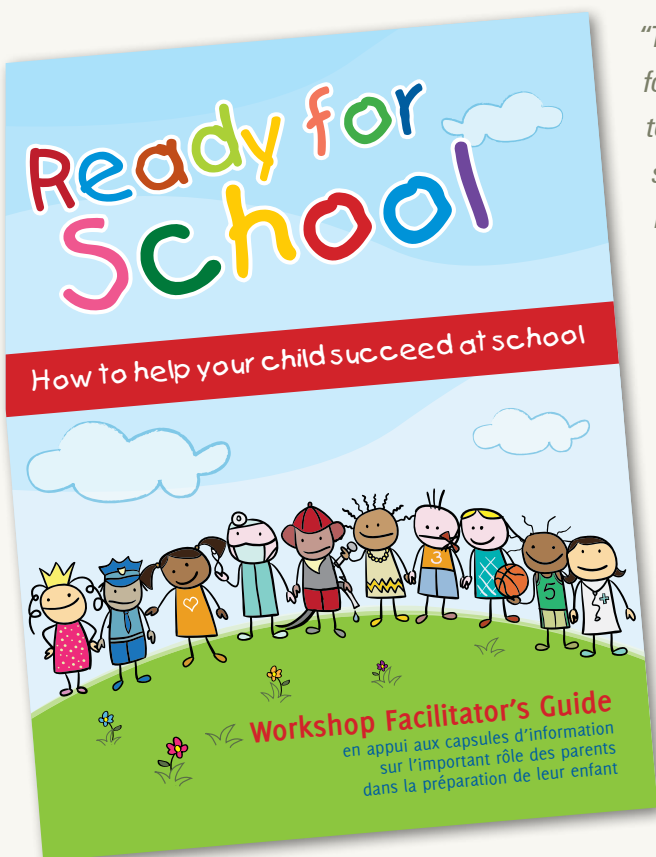
Promotion and Recruitment

New Resource for Newcomers: *Ready for School* DVD Vignettes for the Whole Family

By all indications, the profile of Ontario's Francophone population is changing. As a result, the Ministry of Education has rolled out new guidelines for French-language school boards. By January 2010, school boards will have clarified and streamlined their admission policies, including their procedures for making French-language schools more welcoming. As a result, newcomers who do not speak French could be admitted to French-language schools.

This kind of change requires that measures be taken to facilitate the integration of children and their families into schools. The *Ready for School* DVD vignette series produced for ACÉPO, the provincial organization representing French-language public school boards in Ontario, is a great example of this. The new DVD series helps newly arrived immigrant families to better understand the education system by showing them the simple things they can do to put their children on the path to success.

The DVD series features six short informational vignettes. Each one covers a specific topic in under five minutes, providing parents with tips and creative ideas on how to get their preschooler ready for school. The series is available in both official languages; by the end of 2010, it will be translated into six other languages. One hundred DVDs have already been distributed across the province and, very shortly, the vignettes will also be accessible on the ACÉPO website at www.acepo.org.



"The vignettes are intended for all parents who want to give their children extra support before they begin kindergarten or nursery school in French-language public schools. Immigrant parents in particular, whose primary language of communication at home is neither French nor English, will find the DVD series especially helpful,"

*noted ACÉPO chairman
Ronald Marion.*



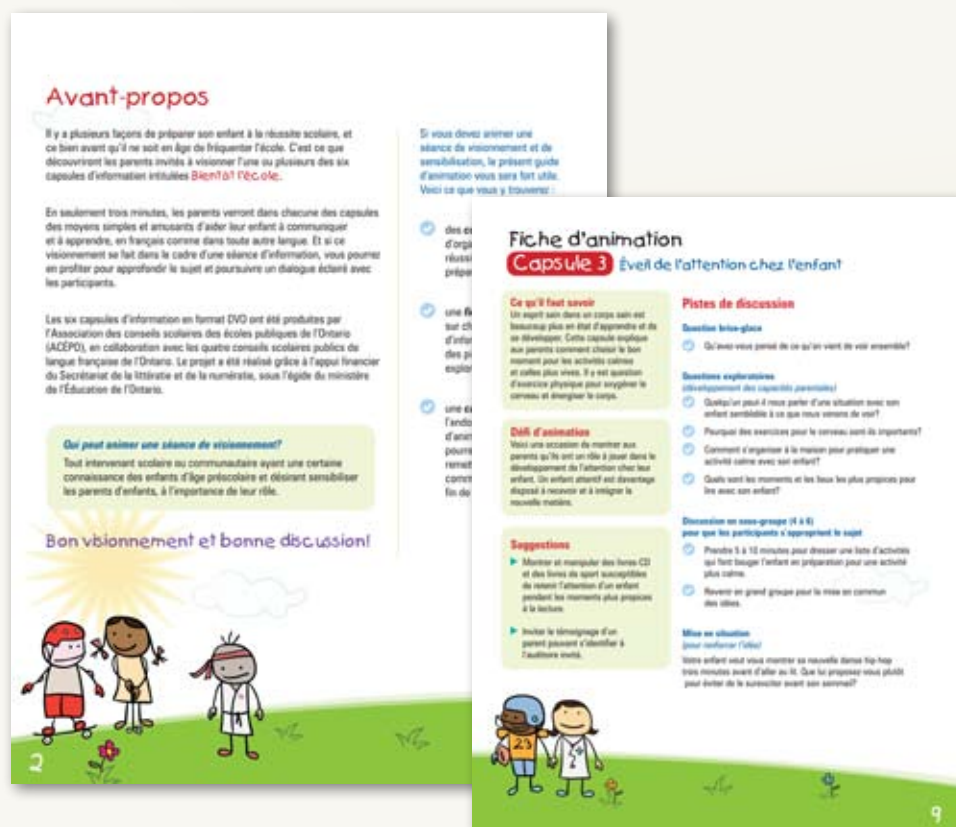
NEW ACÉPO *Ready for School* DVD SERIES

- 1 **The joy of living and learning... in French**
Theme
Parents discover how much their child benefits by learning a new language.
- 2 **Growing up in a reading family**
Theme
The pleasure of reading daily in the other language is seen from fun, new angles.
- 3 **Developing your child's concentration powers**
Theme
Children who concentrate better learn better. The family explores ways to boost a child's concentration powers.
- 4 **Your child the explorer**
Theme
Parents discover that playing is where and when children do a whole lot of learning.
- 5 **Learning to talk and talking to learn**
Theme
Families find that children who learn to express themselves in French before starting school fare better.
- 6 **From arts and crafts to writing**
Theme
Parents see that children who tinker at home will find it easier to learn to write because they have developed motor skills.

Relevant Topics

Each vignette deals with a specific theme that illustrates the important role parents can play in everyday situations to give their child the best possible start in life and increase their chance of success in school. The six themes have been chosen and developed with assistance from a working group that included teachers, parental communication experts and education specialists.

The DVD series focuses on the importance of developing literacy. In each vignette, parents discover different opportunities for parent-child communication and tools to support their child's learning of French, thus promoting the development of language skills. And in cases where children already speak the language, viewing parents learn ways to enrich their child's vocabulary and literacy-related experience.



◀◀ page 2

Projects Promoting Economic Integration

Bilingual job fairs were held in Toronto and in Sudbury for the purpose of identifying employer needs and following up with successful job applicants.

The guide *Qui embauche l'immigrant francophone* (Who hires French-speaking immigrants) is intended for newcomers seeking jobs. In addition to listing all institutions in the Francophone sector with more than 10 full-time employees, it provides users with data on 150 employers that promote fair hiring practices.

Projects Promoting Social Integration

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health is currently engaged in developing a linguistically and culturally appropriate model of intervention. The purpose is to facilitate the integration of French-speaking immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean.

Anti-Délinquance en Poésie is developing an educational project aimed at preventing delinquency among school-age immigrant children through poetry.

Three new coordinators have been hired for the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program, the HOST program and the Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP) program.

Making Strides in Francophone Immigration

CIC Ontario Region has been working on the issues of Francophone immigration for several years, and in cooperation with the federal departments and provincial ministries represented at the Steering Subcommittee since 2003. Much of the progress achieved in this area is attributable in great part to: the regular CIC programs, including Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), Enhanced Language Training (ELT), the Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) and HOST; a greater number

of programs being offered by Francophone organizations; the development of innovative projects (such as Destination Canada 2009; LINC online; guidelines for teaching LINC levels 5 to 7; a bilingual job fair, and the guide to bilingual employers entitled *Qui embauche l'immigrant francophone*).

Since 2007, Ontario has been funding eight new regular programs spearheaded by Francophone organizations, along with 12 new time-limited projects also managed by Francophone organizations.

In 2009-10 and beyond, we will continue to take concrete steps to modernize our immigration system and improve our ability to help newcomers from their first days of settlement and through their long-term integration.

Francophone Communities

Ontario's New Inclusive Definition of Francophone

In Toronto on June 4, 2009, the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs, the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, announced the government of Ontario's new statistical definition of Francophone, what has been termed "*inclusive Francophone definition*" or IFD. The long-awaited announcement was made at an event attended by representatives of Ontario's Francophone population, the provincial government and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Ontario's Francophone population, the second largest in Canada after Quebec, has evolved over the last decade, in large part due to an increasingly diversified immigration. The statistical definition of Francophone, which has not changed since the *French Languages Services Act* (1986), had to evolve in order to reflect changing demographics. The revised definition, which was requested by French-speaking ethnic communities, was also the leading recommendation in the first annual report tabled by Ontario's French Language Services Commissioner, François Boileau. In response, the government, in consultation with the community, developed this inclusive statistical definition to reflect more accurately the evolution and diversity of Ontario's Francophone communities.

This new inclusive definition captures those whose *mother tongue* is neither French nor English, but who have a particular *knowledge of French* as an official language and use French at home, including many recent immigrants to Ontario.

According to 2006 census data, Ontario now has 582,685 Francophones, a 9% adjustment, or 49,835 more than previously counted using strictly the mother tongue variable. Francophones account for 4.8% of the Ontario population. Central and Eastern Ontario, both densely populated regions, benefit most from the adjustment, as there are now 15,765 Francophones in Toronto and 12,840 in Ottawa (upward adjustments of 42% and 10%, respectively).

The new inclusive definition is a unique indicator that makes it possible to more accurately reflect all of the elements that together make up Ontario's Francophone population. In comparison with data previously gathered under the *first spoken official language* variable, the IFD has led to the identification of 58,390 more Francophones among French-speaking visible minorities. This represents an adjustment of more than 11%, or 5,800 persons.

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In practical terms, this new definition will give the government a more accurate picture of the demand for French-language services across the province. As a result, Ontario ministries will be better able to plan service delivery in response to the needs of the Francophone population.

By acknowledging the new demographic reality, the IFD becomes a powerful symbol. Indeed, it will serve to strengthen the sense of belonging and pride of Francophone newcomers across the province.



Cultural Competencies: Necessary Asset in the Global Village

To survive and thrive in a world without borders where people from different origins mix and mingle, it is helpful to have a broad set of skills, and, increasingly, cultural competencies as well.

The non-profit organization *La Passerelle I.D.É.*, which is dedicated to economic integration and development, knows just how great the need for cultural skills training is thanks to its work in Greater Toronto and across Ontario. The organization's experience reveals that Canadian-born Francophones need to acquire cultural skills just as much as French-speaking immigrants and newcomers. This is how the organization got the idea to develop a comprehensive training program that would help people to better understand each other,

work with one another, and become fully engaged in the challenge of building the Canada of tomorrow together.

The Cultural Competencies Training Program was launched in 2009 and its benefits are already being felt in various Francophone communities of Ontario. The program was designed to help both Francophone organizations and

immigrants and newcomers deal with Ontario's fast-changing demographics and to seize the resulting new opportunities. The training approach and program content are highly relevant. They were developed with input from a committee of champions, i.e., a dozen key players who have intimate knowledge of the realities of Ontario's Francophone communities and of the immigrant experience.



Over the course of two years, the champions worked together to develop a unique training formula. A great deal of research was done; together, the committee outlined a common vision and mapped out program contents, making sure in the process that the interests of all target groups would be well served. Along the way, the champions were each compelled to examine their own cultural competencies, a breakthrough exercise which enabled them to further enhance the training program.

Fast-changing Demographics

"This new training program is based on an undeniable fact of Ontario life: the vitality, even the survival of Ontario's *francophonie* depends upon our individual and collective ability to adapt to the profound socio-demographic and cultural changes currently taking place in the province," explains Maxim Jean-Louis, Chair of the committee of champions and also a member of the Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Settlement and Intergovernmental Affairs Directorate, Ontario Region.

To grasp the significance of the new training program, one need only look at the current context. Between 1996 and 2001, Ontario experienced a 40% increase in its French-speaking population belonging to racial and ethnocultural minorities. This injection of new blood is positive in many ways, but it also raises major challenges. In a situation of rapid demographic change, people on all sides, those born here and those born abroad, need tools to deal with different cultures, different mindsets, different values, different beliefs systems in order to live side by side, grow and prosper in harmony.

The innovative aspect of the new Cultural Competencies Training Program is its bi-directional focus. Traditionally, people tended to treat the acquisition of cultural competencies as a one-way process, mainly resting on the shoulders of newcomers. The program created by La Passerelle places the responsibility of acquiring cultural competencies on the shoulders of all parties, namely:

service organizations ready to:

- ▶ take on the challenge of changing demographics;
- ▶ adapt their services to this reality;
- ▶ diversify and expand their client base.

new Canadians ready to:

- ▶ become fully integrated;
- ▶ contribute, grow and prosper;
- ▶ fully engage in community life.

Flexible Training Formula

While the training program follows a well-defined curriculum, its training formula is flexible to allow for content tailoring. In this way, cultural relations management solutions and tools explored in a workshop setting can be fitted to a group's situation or context. And since the program has a *bi-directional focus*, everyone has a role in helping to create a positive and healthy social environment for all.

The three-part training program consists of four training workshops. At stage one, participants' skills are assessed, and they are then directed to an awareness-raising workshop suited to their situation and level of competence. At stage two, participants develop the new cultural competencies through training workshops. And at stage three, participants' newly acquired skills are assessed and follow-up is provided as required. There is a comprehensive 100-page training manual that describes each training module in detail. The training program has funding support from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Ontario Region.

"In practical terms, our aim is to equip people so that they can work, play and grow together in all areas of life. I believe that cultural competencies are a necessary asset in the workplace and in everyday life. The more

we know about dealing effectively with one another, the stronger we are as a Canadian people," asserts Léonie Tchatat, executive director of La Passerelle I.D.É and the visionary behind the new training program.

Workshops have already been held with different groups in different parts of the province such as London and Ottawa, and preliminary results indicate that the training formula is effective. Evaluation reports and testimonials are very positive. Representatives of service organizations report that acquisition of cultural competencies is helping their employees to better understand and deal with new immigrants, their reality and their needs. New Canadians find the training experience equally rewarding. Participants across the board hope the program will continue to be offered.

To sign up for training or obtain an information kit, please contact La Passerelle I.D.É.



416.934.0588
leonie@passerelle-ide.com

Franco-Présence

A Multicultural Gem Will Soon Be Shining in the Nation's Capital

Promoting integration and the development of ethnocultural communities, or fostering ties among Francophones of all origins through the arts and culture: a fine idea that is becoming reality thanks to the work of Congolese cultural pioneer Body Ngoy and his partners!

Funding agencies agree, as do artistic, community and business partners: the *Franco-Présence* co-operative is a brilliant concept. And its cultural influence could extend well beyond Ottawa, if its chief architect is allowed to follow his dream to the end.

"Franco-Présence will be much more than a showcase for the arts and culture. We are building a physical and virtual site specially designed for Francophone artists, artisans and their audiences, where culture and the arts will be accessible to all. La francophonie will be displayed here in all its colours and flavours for everyone to see and appreciate," explains Body Ngoy, the Co-operative's executive director.

The site will be bustling with cultural activities. If all goes according to plan, there will be a bistro-café, the perfect gathering place for social interaction. There will also be a stage area where French-speaking artists can perform, in addition to a well-stocked video library. And at some point down the road, a boutique filled with home-grown literary, artistic and cultural products will open its doors. *Franco-Présence* is a long-term project that will take shape over time.

Celebrating Francophone Diversity

The idea for the *Franco-Présence* co-operative originated with the literary work titled *le Toi et le Moi* co-authored by Canadian immigrant Body Ngoy and Canadian-born Geneviève Langlois. In the fall of 2002, the ebony-ivory duo started to brainstorm about the best way of promoting and celebrating the great spectrum of Francophone diversity and artistic ability.

As he looked for ways to better reflect the full breadth and depth of Francophone diversity and showcase immigrant talent, Body Ngoy came up with the idea of creating a special gathering place pulsating with cultural life at the heart of the Nation's Capital. Hence the name *Franco-Présence*. An artistic promoter by profession, his aim is to encourage different communities to network, showcase

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Body Ngoy, the Co-operative's executive director.

their talents and raise their profile through the sale of arts and crafts. In other words, he has devised a win-win formula that provides an opportunity for members of various communities to get to know one another and flourish in an atmosphere of respect, harmony and mutual discovery. *Franco-Présence* is meant to be a bridge where Canadian-born and immigrant Francophones can meet, greet and grow together.

From the very start, project partners loved the idea of creating a marketplace for home-grown artistic and cultural products where people of all backgrounds are welcome. Partners include leading organizations from key sectors such as *Regroupement franco-ontarien de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Ontario*, *Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario*, *Fondation franco-ontarienne*, *Parents Partenaires en Éducation* and the agency *Art du développement*. The Ontario Trillium Foundation also supports the project as does Ottawa's ACFO where the co-operative's administrative offices are located.

Creation of a Social Enterprise by, for and with Immigrants and Native Francophones

Body Ngoy explains that the *Franco-Présence* concept evolved to become a co-operative made up of many partners committed to the same mission. "The co-operative is a social enterprise in the purest sense of the term. It applies a business approach to address issues for the purpose of fostering positive social change within a community."

The Co-operative was shaped by the needs and aspirations of its target audiences. From the very beginning, in 2002-2003, efforts were made to enlist the support of various communities. A steering committee made up of five members representing different Francophone organizations was set up to identify and assess needs at the community level. A feasibility study was carried out with a view to improving and expanding the *Franco-Présence* concept. Today, the foundation has been laid and Body Ngoy, as executive director, works hand-in-hand with the directors and some 50 volunteer members of the Co-operative to develop the various components of *Franco-Présence*.

At this stage, Canadian Heritage is playing a key role as the Co-operative's main funding source. The *Franco-Présence* project is funded by the Official Languages Support Program, which falls under the community life component of the Cultural Development Fund. It is also funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada for the year 2009-2010.

Economy - Jobs - Recognition

The Canadian Heritage Multiculturalism Program

The mandate of the Multiculturalism Program was derived from the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988) and the Multiculturalism Policy (1971) enshrined in the Act. The Program fosters and supports the engagement of all citizens in building a cohesive and inclusive Canadian society.

In 2009-2010, the Multiculturalism Program will focus on the following priorities:

1. Support for the economic, social, and cultural integration of new Canadians and cultural communities. Priority will be given to projects having the following objectives:

- ▶ assisting new Canadians and cultural communities to gain knowledge and skills in support of their economic, social, and cultural integration and civic engagement;
- ▶ providing opportunities and support for the involvement of new Canadians and cultural communities in partnerships with various stakeholders to identify and resolve issues (e.g. schools, social

services, employment, foreign credentials recognition, justice system, policing, media, etc.); and

- ▶ improving the ability of public institutions to respond to, and integrate, ethnic, racial, cultural, and religious diversity by assisting in the identification and removal of barriers that stand in the way of fair access for all.

2. Facilitation of programs such as mentorship, volunteerism, leadership, and civic education among at-risk cultural youth. Priority will be given to projects having the following objectives:

- ▶ assisting at-risk cultural youth to gain self-confidence, knowledge, and

skills in pursuit of civic engagement (volunteerism);

- ▶ providing opportunities for youth through partnerships with their peers, adults, and community leaders as well as through mentorship initiatives, to gain practical learning experience and develop the skills necessary to contribute to the economic, social and cultural life of their communities;
- ▶ assisting in addressing the root causes of cultural youth marginalization, detachment, and radicalization; and
- ▶ assisting youth in responding to racism and hate-motivated activities.



3. Promotion of inter-cultural understanding and Canadian values (democracy, freedom, human rights and rule of law) through community initiatives, with the objectives of addressing issues of cultural social exclusion (parallel communities) and radicalization. Priority will be given to projects having the following objectives:
- ▶ fostering interaction between communities and supporting cross-sector collaboration in community-based projects to build and shape an inclusive and respectful society;
 - ▶ facilitating community actions and responses in an effort to combat ethnic, racial, cultural and religious conflicts and hate-motivated activities;
 - ▶ supporting community-based initiatives designed to facilitate inter-faith dialogue and increase understanding of the place of religion in Canada in order to combat ignorance and faulty assumptions and foster constructive and informed dialogue about multiculturalism, religions, racism, cultural diversity, and Canadian values;
 - ▶ encouraging social awareness-raising activities aimed at the general public to foster inter-cultural understanding and address the cultural social exclusion of some communities;
 - ▶ increasing awareness and understanding of racism and discrimination, and taking action to foster equal opportunity for all people; and
 - ▶ reducing or eliminating factors contributing to exclusion, disenchantment, and radicalization.

For the Ontario region, persons and organizations interested in sending applications to the Multiculturalism Program are invited to discuss their project and the application intake process with Louise Sauvé-Dubois or Astrid Jacques at 416 954-8257 or Astrid.Jacques@cic.gc.ca

No deadline has been set for project funding applications. Applications may be submitted throughout the year. The Application Guidelines for Funding can be accessed at www.cic.gc.ca/multi.



Business Skills Program for Francophone Immigrants

Think big! is the name of the Business Skills Program launched by ACFO London-Sarnia in 2008. Its goal: to help entrepreneurial Francophone newcomers and immigrants set up, manage and grow their business ventures.

Having a solid business plan is a key element. The program helps aspiring business owners map out their business plan by setting clear objectives, defining expected outcomes, drawing up the business structure and planning day-to-day operations, in addition to number-crunching and identifying potential sources of investment and financing.

In addition to providing support with the development of the business plan, program officers coach budding entrepreneurs as they register with federal, provincial and local governments, providing advice on financing and financial management. Project co-ordinator Eddy Boxinga Mfuru adds that support services include making contact with financial institutions to secure business loans.

"It's a big challenge for new immigrants to start up a business. They have a lot to learn, and not just about the business venture itself. They have to figure out how everything works and that includes Canadian governments and institutions."

Promising Results

The program is popular in the London-Sarnia region and for a good reason. It has been instrumental in launching close to 20 new ventures in the retail trade, automotive, human resources, food and hospitality industries.

In more than half of these ventures, immigrant entrepreneurs were able to secure financing with local institutions. The new businesses have also led to job creation, employing more than 30 full-time workers and a dozen part-time workers.

Success Story

Agroba provides solutions to labour shortages for jobs requiring casual employees.

The young agency is extremely flexible, skilled at recruiting workers both in Canada and abroad, and very good at job placement across Canada. Because it favours cultural diversity, the agency has access to a large pool of workers.

Agroba's specialty is placing workers in the agriculture and food processing industry in the areas of production, shipping and sales. Its clients include employers from different sectors such as health, hospitality and professional cleaning services in Ontario (Windsor, London, Niagara Falls), Alberta (Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Calgary) and Quebec (Montreal and surrounding area, Lac-Saint-Jean).

After just a year in business, the agency has developed strong ties and partnerships with various personnel recruitment agencies as well as factories, farms, hospitals, retirement homes and hotels.

To date, Agroba has successfully placed more than 45 workers.

Agroba is one of the businesses launched barely a year ago thanks to the *Think Big!* Program, and already proving to be quite a success. (See sidebar.)

The Business Skills Program is provided at no cost to immigrant entrepreneurs thanks to grants from Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Office of Francophone Affairs.

I think big!



National Standards for French As A Second Language

The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) is a Canada-wide non-profit agency that works in partnership with the federal government to support adult immigrants and prospective immigrants living and working in Canada. By promoting and establishing language standards in French and English as a second language programs and resources, CCLB fulfils its mandate while supporting government policies aimed at promoting immigration across Canada and particularly in Francophone minority communities.

In French, the national language standards are referred to as *Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens 2006, français langue seconde pour adultes (NCLC)*. In English, they are called the *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000, English as a Second Language for Adults (CLB)*. The standards are commonly referred to by their respective acronyms, i.e., NCLC and CLB.

The NCLC is the national standard for language competency which describes, measures and recognizes French as a second language (FSL) using a 12-level scale based on four language skills: oral comprehension, oral expression, written comprehension and written expression.

NCLC assessors come mainly from educational institutions and French-language immigrant settlement and integration services as well as provincial associations and agencies serving the Francophone population. FSL professionals working in educational institutions and in particular in continuing education are the main users of the reference standard.

"The NCLC benchmark provides a tool that is useful to the Francophone community. CCLB products and services are geared to our needs and attuned to our reality."

*Nicole Olivier, Program Coordinator
CLIC / CLNA, La Cité collégiale*

The federal government currently offers training programs in French and English as a second language for newcomers, adult immigrants and persons trained abroad, which are based on the NCLC or CLB, depending on the individual's language. Several English as a second language (ESL) programs and resources are also funded by provinces since they meet CLB standards. It is interesting to note that the history of CLB began in 1996, i.e., 10 years before the founding of the NCLC in 2006. This explains, to a large degree, why the standards for English are now so widespread and enjoy such support. The government of Quebec, for its part, has distinct jurisdiction status for immigration, and thus has its own adult immigrant program for teaching French using language benchmarks similar to the NCLC.



Since 2006, the CCLB has grown in terms of capacity and expertise in developing measurements and resources relating to French standards, i.e., the NCLC standards, intended mainly for FSL professionals. Apart from the federal government, there are now many

aimed at better serving adult immigrants who want to integrate into Canada's *francophonie* or Quebec. Thanks to this collaboration, the CCLB is looking into possible linkage between the Quebec and NCLC frameworks. Such linkage would surely help to improve and

Through the organizational network of *la francophonie*, French-speaking immigrants also have access to a growing number of ESL programs aimed at facilitating their settlement, integration and retention in minority communities. All stakeholders agree that learning English is key to an immigrant's ability to secure gainful employment, a fact that does not in any way diminish the importance of the French language and its vital role in community life.

"The CCLB truly addresses the pressing needs of Francophone minority communities by implementing new NCLC related resources."

Serge Boulé, president of the CCLB and manager of the Research Department, Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario

funding agencies. For example, Ontario now provides support to foster the development of NCLCs in Francophone communities across the province.

harmonize the teaching and assessment of language competence in French as a second language, while enhancing recognition of the French language across the country.

However, CCLB and its funding agencies still face many challenges in building awareness of the advantages of establishing and subscribing to such norms in Canadian provinces. Obviously, one of the key advantages of the reference framework is that it establishes a common language between the different parties involved in implementing programs and resources within the framework. In addition, since it is a federal initiative, the reference framework has national recognition and offers greater mobility for immigrants wishing to integrate into Francophone communities across Canada. For example, all of the provinces have adopted the CLB reference framework for education and teaching of English as a second language (ESL) to adult immigrants. Not only are the ESL training programs and resources mainly based on this reference framework, but sectoral committees and professional orders in Canada have also signed on to establish a link between language skills and jobs or professions.

The profile of the FSL student clientele constitutes another real challenge when it comes to establishing NCLCs within Francophone minority communities. To increase their demographic weight, Francophone communities must welcome French-speaking immigrants in greater numbers, which would strengthen the French language and culture. Yet, for most immigrants, the French language is a second language, or a third after their mother tongue (or oral dialect) or even after English. Moreover, the clients of these programs are highly diversified; they include immigrants as well as many Canadians wishing to learn French. NCLC norms, which take all of these realities into account, apply to both FSL and complementary French programs. They thus provide sociocultural and sociolinguistic insight into the variability of the French language across Canada, while encouraging students to become fully engaged in the life of the Francophone community that is their home.

The CCLB, fully cognizant of the Quebec reference framework for FSL, maintains ties with the Quebec government through collaboration on pilot projects and the exchange of practices and resources. These efforts are

In that context, it is no longer a question of teaching strictly French to an allophone as it is often the case in the teaching of ESL to newcomers.

CCLB, whose goal is to pursue the implementation of NCLCs thanks to funding support from Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the government of Ontario, has recently developed proficiency assessment tools for Canadian Language Benchmarks. These tools allow teaching institutions to better comply with standards by using standardized, validated, reliable tests. In addition, a two-day training course is offered



to future assessors so that they will be able to use all the testing materials. Furthermore, the CCLB has formulated guidelines based on standards in order to promote and support the delivery of French as a second language training programs.

In 2009-2011, the CCLB plans to develop and offer—online or onsite—various professional development workshops on NCLCs for the benefit of Canada's *francophonie*, including teachers, language assessors, teaching consultants, administrators, employers, and anyone interested in language benchmarks.

The CCLB will thus apply its training capacity to increasing awareness and understanding of language benchmarks, and supporting teachers in fostering compliance with and establishment of NCLCs.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada instigated the creation of the CCLB and, since 1998, through contribution agreements, has encouraged recognition of standards, their establishment and use across Canada in educational, training,

community and employment settings. As part of this process, the CCLB continues to promote NCLCs and CLBs hand-in-hand with the different levels of government and with teachers. It builds expertise in both reference frameworks, identifies the needs of communities and professionals and assumes a leading role in the recognition and use of each language benchmark, according to their respective areas of application and Canadian bilingualism issues. Consequently, in October 2009, the CCLB held a national forum on NCLCs and CLBs at which some 40 participants were consulted on future directions and changes needed in both reference frameworks.

CCLB's recent track record with respect to the Canadian *francophonie* indicates that we are well on our way to tackling the challenges posed by recognition of the French language and the direction in which language benchmarks should evolve nationwide. In a context of language duality, the CCLB must more than ever be ready to take up the challenges of bilingualism as part of its

mandate for both official language benchmarks. To avoid overextending resources, particularly in the area of translation, efforts will be made to establish partnerships as a means of diversifying funding sources for each target client group and based on employment needs.

To conclude, implementation of both language benchmarks must be expanded, while ensuring that the general public is kept well informed of the benefits of adopting one or the other, or even both reference frameworks.

For more information about the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, please visit www.language.ca.



Regionalization

News from the Central and Southwestern Network

Like its counterparts in Northern and Eastern Ontario, the Central and SouthWestern Network has a mandate to promote multisector cooperation (i.e., across institutional, community and private sectors) through meaningful meetings and forums. It is also required to formulate recommendations in support of the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan of the Steering committee for francophone immigration of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. In light of the objectives it set out to achieve in its 2008-2009 / 2009-2010 Action Plan, the Network is proud of the progress it has made since it was launched barely two years ago. Major achievements include:

- ▶ Workshops to build and strengthen the capacity of Francophone organizations in the Southwestern region of the province
- ▶ Coordination and planning meetings at the local level
- ▶ Creation of a regional immigration action committee in the Niagara region
- ▶ Support of local initiatives aimed at integrating French-speaking immigrants into the workforce

Building Capacity to Help Francophone Community Organizations

To help organizations build capacity, the Network held a series of workshops showing them how to respond effectively to requests for proposals issued by funding bodies. These workshops are a training exercise for service providers who prepare grant applications for submission to the four major funding bodies, namely CIC, Canadian Heritage, the Ministry of Citizenship and of Immigration of Ontario (MCI), and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The first workshop, held on December 1, 2008 at the Hamilton Sheraton, was co-hosted by Irena Nikolova, Regional Program Advisor at CIC, and Yacouba Traoré, Bilingual Program Manager with the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

A second workshop was held on January 28, 2009, in Toronto. In spite of a snowstorm, an impressive number of French-language organizations from Windsor, London, Niagara, Hamilton and Toronto turned out for the occasion. Hosted by Louise Sauvé-Dubois, Canadian Heritage/Multiculturalism representative at CIC, and Isabel Ekoko of the MCI, the workshop enabled participants to gain a better understanding of the policies and requirements governing CIC and MCIO requests for proposals. And for their part, government representatives and civil servants now have a better understanding of the challenges posed by Francophone immigration and the difficulties service organizations encounter because they have so few means at their disposal.

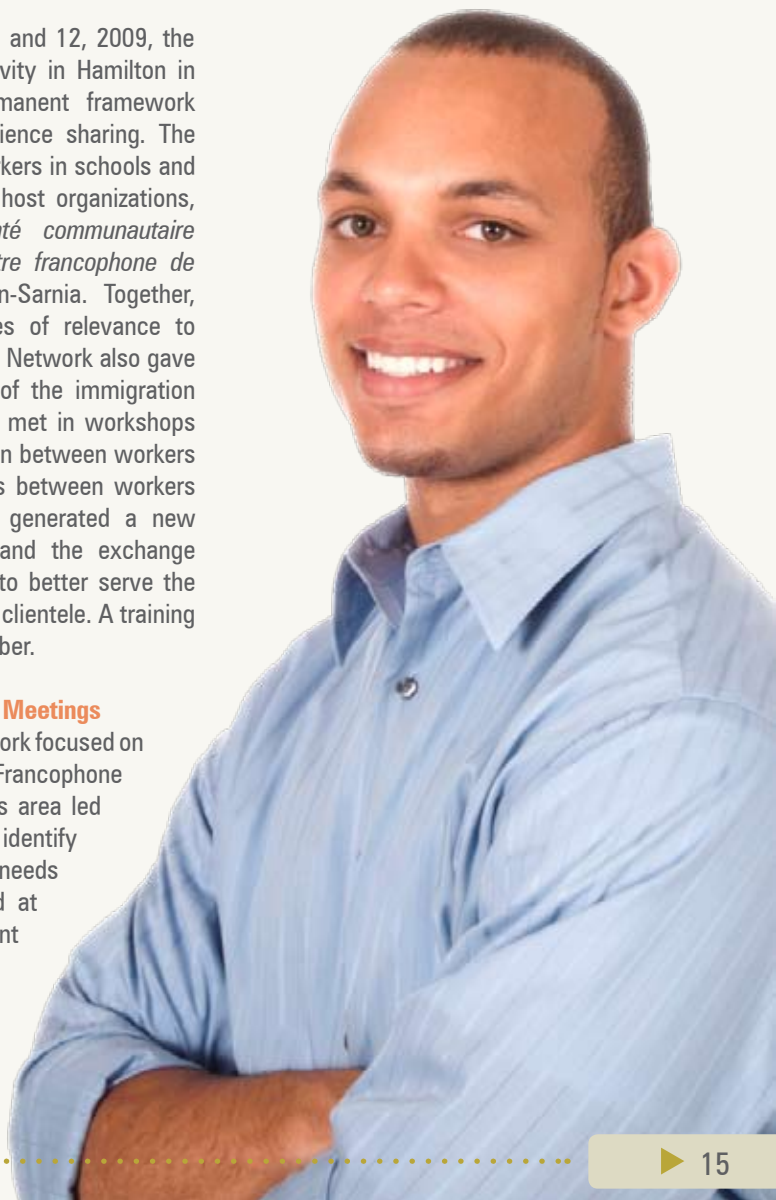
In addition, on February 11 and 12, 2009, the Network organized an activity in Hamilton in connection with the permanent framework for cooperation and experience sharing. The event was attended by workers in schools and the management of three host organizations, i.e., the *Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara*, the *Centre francophone de Toronto* and ACFO London-Sarnia. Together, they shared best practices of relevance to immigrant intervention. The Network also gave an overview presentation of the immigration situation. Participants then met in workshops to discuss conflict resolution between workers and supervisors as well as between workers and clients. The meeting generated a new impetus for partnerships and the exchange of best practices in order to better serve the French-speaking immigrant clientele. A training session was held in November.

Coordination and Planning Meetings

In these meetings, the Network focused on the theme of regionalized Francophone immigration. Efforts in this area led to a study in Peel region to identify and analyze immigrant needs as well as services aimed at facilitating their settlement and integration into the Francophone community.

In addition, in collaboration with the *Centre d'établissement des nouveaux immigrants de Peel*, the Network held discussion groups made up of representatives of English-language and French-language service providers and immigrants on January 17 and 30, 2009.

In the Simcoe region, the Network organized a one-day think-tank in Barrie on February 10, 2009, with the help of *La Clé d'Ia Baie*. Participating service providers (English speaking, French-speaking and immigrant) shared their perspectives of Francophone immigration.



Ongoing Activities

As part of its local support work to help Francophone immigrants integrate into the workforce, the Network is currently backing a community garden project in the Niagara region with the help of RDÉE, an organization dedicated to fostering economic development. The project, still in its early stages, will ultimately lead to the creation of two cooperatives run by immigrants, one that cultivates exotic vegetables and the other specializing in food distribution. The goal of the project promoters, immigrant women's groups in the Niagara area, is to give French-speaking newcomers the opportunity to put their agricultural skills to good use.

In addition, the Network continues to support the regional action committee on Francophone immigration (CARIF) in the Niagara region. As recommended at a forum and in partnership with the Network, this committee serves as the local consultative body for questions, issues and other factors affecting Francophone immigration. And following the opening of a new immigrant service location in Fort Erie in June, this committee is now working with the Network to develop and implement a welcome strategy in the Niagara region.

Other Events

Planning for the new fiscal year is already underway and the emphasis will be on the economic issues of relevance to Francophone immigration. A meeting with employers is already planned. This will be an opportunity for exchanges and the search for possible solutions to obstacles in the hiring of French-speaking immigrants.

In a partnership arrangement, the Network will also develop 2009-2010 programming for workshops aimed at further building capacity in community organizations.

It should also be noted that, in partnership with *Toile des carrières*, an extensive job fair attended by many employers was held in Toronto on October 7 and 8, 2009.

The Network's 2nd regional forum will be held in February 2010.

The Network Goes Forward!

The Central and Southwestern Network is recognized by Francophone organizations and communities as an important stakeholder around which they rally and whose activities they support. The Network team and its partners are deeply committed to successful Francophone immigration throughout Central and Southwestern Ontario.



News from the Eastern Network

Following the Network's third Forum in Kingston in March 2009, which attracted some hundred participants, local action committees went to work on the project recommendations and suggestions that emerged from forum discussions.

The various task forces have been busy mapping out a plan of action for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The three main thrusts of this plan are as follows: promotion of employability by supporting job creation in the artistic sector, creation of a customized venture capital fund, and promotion of immigrant employability in rural areas. The promotion will be done through a partnership between the Eastern Network and United Way, which oversees the activities of Hire Immigrants Ottawa.

Two of the Network's local committees, Kingston and Cornwall, recommend a study be undertaken to assess the state of Francophone immigration in their respective regions.

This would give them a more accurate picture of the situation and provide an

assessment of immigrant services delivered on the ground.

Key organizations continue to join the Network, thereby reinforcing its partnership base in the region. They include the Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Community Futures Development Corporation, the *Caisse populaire Desjardins de Cornwall*, the *Centre de ressources familiales de l'Estrie*, the *Société de développement communautaire de Hawkesbury*, the *Centre canadien de leadership en évaluation* and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

On the issue of employability, the Network is continuing its awareness-raising campaign among ethnocultural communities in an effort to promote a better understanding of the value of trades in North America. There are also plans to produce a video for distribution across Eastern Ontario. Perception among immigrants is changing for the better; registration in La Cité collégiale's trades

program is on the rise.

In an effort to promote the hiring of French-speaking immigrant talent, the Network has established a partnership with two financial institutions, namely Scotia Bank and Bank of America. This move is already producing results; a French-speaking candidate has been hired by Bank of America. And through the Eastern Network, La Cité collégiale has established ties with this financial institution. Together, the new partners will develop a customized training program designed to better integrate French-speaking immigrants into the workforce.

The Network has also taken steps to take part in a new initiative created by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) which is called Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs). The Network intends to take an active part in related activities to ensure consistent immigration planning and coordination. Accordingly, it has identified several LIPs in Eastern Ontario, with the exception of Stormont-Dundas-Glengarry.

The Network has attended the first meetings of the Kingston and Peterborough LIPs. Through its presence and interventions, the Network seeks to highlight issues of particular relevance to Francophone immigration and, with the full support of English-speaking partners, develop programs tailored to the needs of Anglophone and Francophone communities.

The Eastern Network continues to mobilize key players on immigration issues and raise awareness in communities committed to taking action. In the Kingston, Ottawa and Cornwall regions, an action plan has been mapped out and regional stakeholders are moving on to the next phase of work. The Network believes that, with the help of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, it will be possible to implement a large number of projects in rural areas that meet the priority needs of French-speaking immigrants.



networks

News from the Northern Network

The Northern Network continues to work closely with stakeholders in various sectors with the following objectives in mind:

- ▶ To build capacity in Francophone organizations serving French-speaking immigrants
- ▶ To promote multiculturalism in day care centres and schools
- ▶ To promote cultural diversity within the host community
- ▶ To foster economic integration of French-speaking immigrants
- ▶ To encourage exchanges and foster closer ties between the host community and the immigrant community

One-stop Service

One of the Network's priorities is to set up a one-stop service for French-speaking immigrants. This was actually one of the priority needs identified by the region's Francophone organizations. The Network intends to follow through with this project by establishing sustainable partnerships and working closely with Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Awareness-raising

In June 2009, the Network organized a dinner for Francophone groups in partnership with Greater Sudbury's *Centre de santé communautaire*. The goal of this networking

event was to bring together stakeholders from various cultures to foster intercultural exchanges, sharing and ties.

In August 2009, an awareness-raising session was held with staff members and the children of Walden Day Care Centre at St-Paul de Lively School, in Sudbury. The focus was on cultural diversity in Northern Ontario. Key aspects of foreign cultures were discussed and young participants learned about the importance of welcoming their immigrant peers. The central message, which was well received, was one of respect and appreciation for cultural differences.

When school resumed in September 2009, organizers set up an information booth at Boréal College to welcome new immigrants and provide essential information about settlement and integration services. The great



majority of immigrant students signed on as members of *Contact interculturel francophone de Sudbury (CIFS)*, the organization that provides settlement and integration services to French-speaking immigrants in the Greater Sudbury area. By joining CIFS, newcomers maintain active ties to the Francophone community and stay involved in French-language activities. This type of outreach is a direct response to four of the five priority objectives identified by the Steering Sub-committee. Indeed, by assuring the social, economic and cultural retention of Francophone immigrants, we help to increase the number of immigrants in host communities.

Several recreational and sports activities, such as the soccer tournament held in Sudbury as part of the Saint-Jean festivities, crowded the Network's summer agenda. As a participant in the tournament, the Network formed six teams: Laurentian University, Boréal College, Carrefour francophone du Grand Sudbury, CBON la première chaîne de Radio-Canada, Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury and CIFS. More than 200 people—players and spectators—joined in. The tournament had two objectives: to foster leadership and promote networking between members of the different French-speaking communities. Both objectives were met as many immigrant students and community leaders were able to socialize like never before and expand their contact base.

The community BBQ held in August 2009 is also noteworthy, as it gave the immigrant community and the host community a chance to meet and greet each other in a friendly setting. For many immigrants and new residents, the event also helped break their isolation by allowing them to reach out to people in their community who share common interests and situations. The Network believes this social interaction formula is highly effective, because it tears down barriers to the social, economic and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants.

Professional Training

With the support of community organizations such as Volunteer Sudbury, the Northern Network held two information sessions for the benefit of immigrants. The goal was to give them an opportunity to explore volunteer work as a tool of cultural and socioeconomic integration in their host community. As part of this training, participants learn how important it is to engage in volunteerism in Canadian society and the many opportunities it provides for personal and professional growth.

Since the tendency may sometimes be to underestimate the impact of the volunteer experience, training sessions emphasize the many benefits of volunteerism. Research shows that volunteer experience is an important tool for social integration at two levels. On one hand, it facilitates access to the labour market or training; on the other hand, it allows one to gain knowledge and skills. Participants discover that volunteerism can help them overcome obstacles such as lack of work experience in Canada.

For many immigrants and new residents, the event also helped break their isolation by allowing them to reach out to people in their community who share common interests and situations.



Settlement and Integration

In both of these areas, the action of the Northern Network focuses on achieving the following:

- ▶ promoting Northern Ontario through and on the Internet;
- ▶ establishing partnerships for the purpose of devising a communication tool;
- ▶ developing welcome kits for newcomers.

The Northern Network chose to develop welcome kits as a way of facilitating the social and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants in the host community. The kits will provide information essential to newcomers in the days following their arrival, e.g., accommodation, housing, employment, food and nutrition, shopping centres, government services including French-language services available in the host region.

The Network also plans to participate in a broad public consultation / strategic planning session to be held by Greater Sudbury's *francophonie*. This is a huge undertaking involving key stakeholders from all sectors of activity—arts, culture and heritage, business, education, immigration, justice, health, community and social services. The Network's participation will focus more on sectoral immigration discussions where a vision for the future has been adopted.

Helpful Links

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada:
www.cic.gc.ca
- Government of Ontario:
www.ontarioimmigration.ca/index.asp
- etablissement.org, (information and resources for immigrants in Ontario)
- Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, November 2003: www.cic.gc.ca/francais/ressources/publications/etablissement/cadre-minoritaire.asp
- Strategic Plan To Foster Immigration To Francophone Minority Communities, September 2006: www.cic.gc.ca/FRANCAIS/ressources/publications/etablissement/plan-minoritaires.asp
- Le Réseau de l'Est de L'Ontario:
www.cesoc.ca/fr/reseau.htm
- Le Réseau du Centre-Sud-Ouest:
www.etablissement.org/reseau
- Réseau du Nord
www.cifs.ca

